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Technical assistance and capacity-building

Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights on the situation of human rights in Guinea*

Summary

In the present report, submitted pursuant to Human Rights Council resolution 23/23 of 14 June 2013, the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights describes the human rights situation in Guinea in 2013 and makes recommendations to address diverse human rights problems. The High Commissioner also provides information on the activities of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights in Guinea and on the results achieved through the technical assistance provided by the latter.

The year 2013 saw the holding of legislative elections, long delayed owing to significant differences of opinion between the political actors as to their organization.

During the reporting period, the Government continued its efforts to reform the security sector with the adoption of the national security policy and relevant sectoral policies, following a participatory process. The Government also adopted certain measures to improve conditions of detention, in particular the provision of better food and the building or renovation of certain prisons and infrastructure for the judiciary, the police and the gendarmerie.

Numerous challenges remain, however, and most of these measures have not been accompanied by structural reforms likely to produce lasting results in the field of human rights. Impunity and weakness in the administration of justice remain a major concern, in particular, the failures in the judiciary which continue to erode the confidence of citizens in the justice system and which have led to the emergence of acts of private justice to the detriment of the rule of law.

* Late submission.

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Furthermore, the persistence of violence against women and an increase in acts of violence, in particular inter-communal violence, followed by few sanctions, are barriers to the establishment of peace, security and social cohesion and hamper the development of the country and the consolidation of the rule of law.

These challenges and the root causes of this violence, in particular youth unemployment, illiteracy, lack of education, the culture of impunity and discrimination on the basis of ethnicity, need to be addressed urgently in an appropriate and comprehensive manner in order to prevent fresh conflict, to enable the populations to coexist peacefully and to build an environment for peace and development.

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I. Introduction

1. In the present report, submitted pursuant to Human Rights Council resolution 23/23 of 14 June 2013, the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights assesses the human rights situation in Guinea in 2013 and the measures taken by the Government to implement the recommendations of international human rights mechanisms, including those made at the universal periodic review and the recommendations made in the previous report of the High Commissioner (A/HRC/22/39). The High Commissioner also reviews the activities of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) in Guinea and makes a number of recommendations addressed to the Government and the international community.

II. Main political, security, economic and social developments affecting human rights

2. The holding of the legislative elections of 28 September 2013 was a crucial development, marking the end of the transition that had begun with the holding of the presidential elections of 2010. The pre-election period was dominated by the tensions and differences of opinion between the Government and the opposition, which led to demonstrations, some involving human rights violations.

3. In fact, the coalitions of the opposition parties, the Collectif des partis politiques pour la finalisation de la transition (Collectif), the Alliance pour la démocratie et le progrès (ADP) and the parties of the centre resumed demonstrations in February 2013, demanding that the technical operator responsible for revising the electoral lists and the vote of Guineans living abroad should have its contract terminated. Against a background of political impasse and lack of dialogue between the representatives of the pro-Government camp and the opposition, the appointment on 15 April 2013, at the request of the Guineans, of the Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General for West Africa as a facilitator made it possible for political and electoral negotiations to resume in May 2013. These negotiations led to the signing of an agreement, known as the "3 July Agreement", establishing conditions for the organization of the legislative elections, accompanied by a timeline signed by all the stakeholders.

4. In total, between February and July 2013, the violent clashes between, on the one hand, law enforcement officers and demonstrators and, on the other, the President's sympathizers and the opposition supporters, left, according to the OHCHR office in Guinea, at least 31 demonstrators dead, including 23 shot to death, and 750 others injured, including 38 with gunshot wounds and 2 law enforcement officials dead and 27 others injured.

5. The final results of the legislative elections published on 15 November 2013 were, however, disputed by some elements of the opposition.

6. In addition to the political violence, the illegal circulation of small arms and light weapons, as well as political and ethnic extremism, continued to affect the security situation. The violent inter-communal clashes that occurred in the south-eastern Forest Region from 15 to 17 July 2013 illustrate the vulnerability of Guinea in the face of this threat. These clashes between two of the main ethnic groups in the region were surprising both in the scale of the violence and the methods used by the protagonists. During these events, at least 218 people were killed, including 73 women and 48 children, and 473 people were injured, including 142 women and 104 children. These incidents were preceded by sporadic acts of violence that occurred between villages in Haute Guinée

between April and June 2013, leaving 4 people dead. Political and ethnic clashes also took place in Conakry in March 2013.

7. As well as political tensions, Guinea experienced social unrest in 2013, which led to violent demonstrations, in particular in certain districts of Conakry. The main demands related to better living conditions, given that there had been limited progress in improving access to basic social services.

8. With regard to economic governance, efforts to improve the macroeconomic situation launched in 2012 are ongoing. Progress in controlling inflation and stabilizing the currency has been confirmed. The wage rate of workers in the public and private sectors has increased gradually. The Government has taken measures to simplify procedures for starting businesses and amended the Mining Code in order to encourage investment. Once the legislative elections had been held, the European Union announced the release of the tenth and eleventh European Development Funds. These measures have resulted in Guinea gaining four places in the ranking of the Doing Business 2014 report of the World Bank.[1] Nevertheless, Guinea remains one of the least developed countries, ranking 178 out of 187 countries on the Human Development Index.[2] The poverty rate increased at the national level, rising from 53 per cent in 2007 to 55.2 per cent in 2012. Furthermore, youth unemployment remains a major concern, affecting at least 15 per cent of young people with secondary-level education, 42 per cent of those having completed technical and vocational education programmes and nearly 61 per cent of university graduates. For female graduates, the figure for those unable to find employment is 85.7 per cent, compared to 61 per cent for male graduates. Other than young people in education, joblessness affects 70 per cent of those aged under 25, irrespective of their level of education and place of residence.

III. Situation of human rights

9. Since the previous report of the High Commissioner, the authorities have made efforts to strengthen the promotion of human rights. These efforts have resulted in particular, in the security sector, in the adoption of the Code of Military Justice and the establishment of a military court. It should, however, be noted that, owing to the absence of a legislative body as a result of the postponement of the elections, it has not been possible to undertake comprehensive structural reforms aimed at achieving lasting results in such areas of human rights and the rule of law as the administration of justice, transitional justice and the fight against impunity. The lack of improvement in this last area has been a factor in the rise in sexual violence against women and has contributed to the increase of cases of torture and ill-treatment in detention.

A. Extrajudicial killings, torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment

10. In her previous report (A/HRC/22/39, para. 54 (b)), the High Commissioner for Human Rights recommended that the Government should equip the security forces with the

[1] World Bank, *Doing Business 2014: Understanding Regulations for Small and Medium-Size Enterprises*, Washington, 2013. www.doingbusiness.org/~/media/GIAWB/Doing%20Business/Documents/Annual-Reports/English/ DB14-Full-Report.pdf.

[2] United Nations Development Programme, *Human Development Report 2013, The Rise of the South: Human Progress in a Diverse World*, New York, 2013, Table 1, http://hdr.undp.org/en/data.

means necessary to perform their public security role in accordance with the relevant applicable international principles and ratify the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (para. 54 (d)). The right to life and the right to respect for the physical and moral integrity of the person form part of the "hard core" of human rights. They are protected respectively by articles 3 and 5 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, articles 6 and 7 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, ratified by the Republic of Guinea in 1978, and article 6 of the Guinean Constitution.

11. In 2013, political violence and inter-communal clashes caused heavy loss of life. Between February and May 2013, the demonstrations organized in Conakry by the opposition in protest against the conditions for the organization of the legislative elections degenerated into violent clashes between the security forces and demonstrators. These demonstrations were characterized by the almost systematic use of violence at the end of the march by the demonstrators or other persons infiltrating the demonstration. The violence included the throwing of objects, the erection of barricades, the use of knives and the destruction of private and public property.

12. The Government has taken little action although it is responsible for initiating investigations and prosecutions related to this violence, punishing the perpetrators and paying appropriate compensation to the victims and their families.

13. Likewise, despite hundreds of deaths, injuries and disappearances caused by the inter-ethnic violence in July 2013 in the Forest Region, the judges appointed to investigate these incidents have been obliged to postpone their work for political reasons.

14. Furthermore, the OHCHR office in Guinea has noted the almost systematic use of torture and ill-treatment against persons in detention, police custody or held at control posts. The incidents that occurred in Siguiri prison, in the Soronkony military camp, near Kankan,[3] the cases of torture in the Lola prison in Guinée Forestière and the acts committed during custody in the Mandiana police station in Haute Guinée are examples of these practices. In this latter case, two individuals were tied up, burnt and exposed to the sun. One person died as a result of the physical abuse received during detention in Siguiri prison.

15. In February 2013, in its concluding observations, the Committee on the Rights of the Child expressed its deep concern that children who are taken to police stations are often subjected to ill-treatment or torture with a view to extracting confessions from them (CRC/C/GIN/CO/2, para. 46).

B. Sexual violence and violence against women and girls

16. Of the 105 universal periodic review recommendations, at least 16 call on Guinea to take action to combat violence against women and girls and female genital mutilation (A/HRC/15/4, para. 71). The Committee on the Rights of the Child has recommended that the State party should strengthen efforts to prevent female genital mutilation, including through awareness-raising (CRC/C/GIN/CO/2, para. 56 (b)).

[3] In September 2013, 33 young people were arrested for public order disturbances during the election campaign; some were arrested in front of their homes and others rounded up at night. These persons were arrested by security forces in Conakry and then transferred without any form of procedure to a military camp at Soronkony, 700 km to the east of Conakry, where they were detained for 10 days and subjected to ill-treatment. According to the victims, these arrests were not linked to the electoral context.

17. In 2013, despite the law prohibiting female genital mutilation, the OHCHR Guinea office noted the continuing existence of several forms of violence against girls and women, in particular female genital mutilation, which 96 per cent of girls and women still undergo, according to official statistics (Ministry of Social Affairs, the Advancement of Women and Children's Affairs) and which are performed by both paramedical practitioners and traditional practitioners. Forced and early marriages, domestic violence and sexual violence, including acts carried out in places of detention by law enforcement officials, are recurrent forms of violence against girls and women in Guinea. Such violence occurs throughout the country but is particularly widespread and recurrent in Guinée Forestière.

18. In 2013, the OHCHR office in Guinea and the civil society organizations involved in this field catalogued at least 72 cases of rape and sexual assault, including 55 cases involving minors. In total, at least 600 acts of violence were committed against women, 92 per cent of which were against women aged from 15 to 49. Some of these acts committed by law enforcement officials, in particular in custody cells or prison cells, have remained unpunished. Thus, the perpetrators of rapes of underage girls committed at the Lola prison and during custody at the Samoe police station have not yet been prosecuted.

19. Victims who have filed complaints have been subjected to acts of intimidation or pressure from members of their family or the community.

20. In recent years, the Government has made considerable efforts in the areas of legislative and institutional reform and training and awareness-raising in the fight against sexual violence and violence against women and girls. Measures adopted include a law on reproductive health, along with five implementing orders, a children's code prohibiting and criminalizing female genital mutilation, a strategic plan to combat gender-based violence and a strategic plan on accelerated measures to end female genital mutilation for the period 2012–2016.

21. With the support of the United Nations system, an action plan has been adopted for the implementation of Security Council resolutions 1325 (2000), 2106 (2013) and 2122 (2013). Fourteen special police stations have been created and the national protection body, the Office for the Protection of Gender, Children and Morals, has been restructured with a view to making the fight against sexual violence and violence against women and girls more effective. With the technical support of national and international partners, numerous training and awareness-raising sessions have been organized for magistrates and criminal investigation officers on these forms of violence.

22. Nevertheless, the social context affects the efforts made to combat sexual violence and violence against women and girls, in particular the fear of being stigmatized, which leads families to prefer discreet, amicable settlements. Out of 363 cases of sexual assault against women or girls in Conakry, only 18 were brought to court in 2013. The lack of adequate medical and psychosocial care services, the crisis of confidence in the judicial system and the impunity surrounding such violence are also important factors limiting the results of the efforts made.

C. Civil liberties and elections

23. In her previous report, the High Commissioner recommended that the Government should safeguard respect for fundamental rights and freedoms, in particular the right to demonstrate peacefully (A/HRC/22/39, para. 54 (a)). The free exercise of these freedoms was somewhat restricted in the context of the elections, either by the action or the failure to act of the Government.

24. The right to freedom of peaceful demonstration is safeguarded by article 10 of the Guinean Constitution and the arrangements for its implementation are provided for in

article 106 et seq. of the Criminal Code. During the reporting period, the right to peaceful protest was disrupted, mainly on account of violent actions on the part of young people from the opposition and the President's camp, and certain actions of the security forces. During most of the various opposition marches in Conakry, in particular in February, March and May 2013, young persons close to the parties organizing the protests erected barricades, prevented their fellow citizens from moving about freely, harmed them physically and stole some items of their property. Similarly, groups close to the Government organized counter-demonstrations, causing scenes of violence that resulted in serious injuries and considerable material damage on both sides.

25. The rules protecting the exercise of the freedom of the press are contained in Act No. L002 of 22 June 2010. Press organs may, in principle, be freely created and they operate without major restrictions. During the election campaign, the political parties and all the candidates were able to express their opinions through the media, thereby enabling voters to make their choice. Nonetheless, in Faranah opposition leaders complained about the fact that they had encountered difficulties in disseminating their campaign messages on rural radio stations as a result of instructions reportedly given by the National Communications Council. Furthermore, on the day of the vote, 28 September 2013, the Minister of Communications is said to have urged the director of a private radio station broadcasting in Nzérékoré to close his station, in breach of the relevant principles of authority and procedure. That decision was annulled by the National Communications Council.

26. Regarding the right to vote, attempts to influence the choice of voters were noted in certain localities, in particular Kindia and Forécariah. Administrative authorities — district heads, polling station staff and even representatives of political parties — sought to take advantage of the illiteracy or lack of knowledge of the voters in order to influence their choice by indicating their "preferred" candidates and advising them on who to vote for.

27. Even though there were no major incidents during the electoral process, the OHCHR Guinea office was informed of threats and intimidation against representatives of the political parties on polling day and during the operations to gather the ballots, in particular in Lola, in Guinée Forestière, as well as in Boké and Kindia, in Basse-Guinée. These actions by the local authorities in those regions where decentralized units of the Independent National Electoral Commission and law enforcement officials were in place primarily affected members of the opposition parties and representatives of political parties, but also concerned a member of the local administration. While the results were being collated in Kindia, the president of the Centralization Committee is reported to have expelled the representatives of two opposition parties who were demanding greater transparency in the process. In the prefecture of Macenta, on the day after the legal campaign period closed, 27 September 2013, the candidate of the Groupement pour la réconciliation, l'unité et la prospérité (GRUP), an opposition party, is said to have been beaten by the bodyguards of the Minister of Presidential Security. It is also alleged that those bodyguards instructed the candidate not to file a complaint.

28. In the eight administrative regions of the country, a significant number of citizens were unable to enrol on the electoral list and many of those who were properly enrolled did not receive their voters' cards. The percentage of registered voters not receiving their voters' cards was 46 per cent in the prefecture of Télimélé, in the administrative region of Kindia, in Basse-Guinée. The lack of a clear indication regarding the location of polling stations and their great distance from voters' homes contributed to citizens being deprived of their right to vote, in particular in the regions of Kindia, Kankan and Nzérékoré. Similarly, the lack of electoral equipment, such as polling booths, in certain of the country's localities, meant that citizens were obliged to vote for candidates in public, which constitutes a violation of the secrecy of the ballot.

D. Administration of justice and conditions of detention

29. In her previous report on the situation of human rights in Guinea, the High Commissioner recommended accelerating the reform of the justice sector (A/HRC/22/39, para. 54 (h)). The Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review recommended that Guinea should improve the conditions in prisons and detention centres, and enhance victims' access to legal redress and establish special measures for their protection (A/HRC/15/4, paras. 71.21 and 71.64).

30. In 2012, the Government initiated the reform of the judicial system, which continued in 2013 and which resulted, amongst other things, in the establishment of a military court and the adoption by the National Transition Council of two organization acts, one establishing the Supreme Council of Justice and the other governing the judiciary. However, Government has yet to pass implementing legislation for those acts. In addition, substantial steps have been taken to renovate certain prisons and to improve prison food.

31. However, these measures are slow to have an impact on the quality of justice and, more specifically, on access to justice. The protection of victims and witnesses is an area of concern, especially in cases of sexual violence. In 2013, out of the 72 recorded cases, at least a dozen victims reported threats and intimidation and expressed fears of reprisals against their relatives. In several instances, this situation led to the proceedings being abandoned.

32. The legal framework governing detention and the administration of places of detention has recently been modified, in particular the Criminal Code and the Code of Criminal Procedure. Nevertheless, as the Committee on the Rights of the Child stated at its meeting of 1 February 2013, children are placed in pretrial detention for long periods, and legal assistance is rarely provided because of the shortage of lawyers. Between 2012 and 2013, the number of detainees did not fall significantly, largely because of procedural time limits and, in particular, long periods of pretrial detention.

33. Pressure is also exerted by means of public demonstrations organized with a view to halting proceedings and freeing detainees. The increase in instances of private justice reflects the continuing lack of confidence of citizens in the justice system, which results partly from geographical remoteness, the high cost of judicial remedies, the limited number of magistrates and their uneven distribution throughout the country, as well as the low level of specialization of judges who are outside Conakry.

34. The organization of the judiciary is based on a single judge system, and the criminal justice system is dysfunctional in many regards in spite of the progressive measures taken to remedy the situation. The average length of pretrial detention is not in accordance with Guinea's national and international legal obligations. In 2013, out of the 2,670 cases followed up, 1,728 had exceeded the legal time limit for pretrial detention (i.e., 64.71 per cent). With the exception of certain emblematic trials, the waiting time for the initial hearing is several months, or even several years; this extends the proceedings and leads to arbitrary or illegal detentions. The vast majority of prefectures to which justices of the peace are assigned have civil prisons, with the exception of Macenta, in Guinée Forestière, Mandiana in Haute Guinée and Koubia and Tougué in Moyenne-Guinée.

35. The Government, in the person of the Minister of Human Rights and Public Liberties, has denounced the poor conditions to which detainees are subjected. Based on the recommendations of the Etats Généraux de la Justice of March 2011, the Government has taken steps to improve the material conditions of detention. In 2013, these steps led to an improvement in prison food and the building or renovation of certain prisons and infrastructure for the judiciary, the police and the gendarmerie. The State has embarked on a process of reform of the security sector, which has started to have a positive impact on the

conduct of certain judicial police officers. In May 2013, for the first time ever, the police services of Nzérékoré respected the time limit of 48 hours for police custody in 100 per cent of cases. This is due in particular to the combined efforts and reminders of the Public Prosecutor at the Court of First Instance of Nzérékoré, judicial police officers, non-governmental human rights organizations, which carried out regular visits, and OHCHR.

E. Fight against impunity

36. In her previous report, the High Commissioner recommended that the Government should strengthen the fight against impunity, in particular by prosecuting the alleged perpetrators of human rights violations involved in the events of 28 September 2009 (A/HRC/22/39, para. 54 (e)), and granting appropriate reparation to the victims, thus reiterating one of the recommendations of the International Commission of Inquiry mandated to establish the facts and circumstances of the events of 28 September 2009.

37. In 2013, the Government increased its support for the panel of judges set up to deal with this case. The judges heard more than 200 victims and witnesses. They indicted a senior army official with ministerial rank and indicted a gendarmerie agent on a rape charge. However, the fact that these individuals still occupy influential positions within the civil service is cause for concern for the victims and witnesses.

38. In addition, little progress has been made in other important investigations, in particular regarding the events in Zogota, in the prefecture of Nzérékoré, in August 2012.[4] Justice is also slow to investigate the circumstances in which dozens of people were killed or injured by firearms during public demonstrations held by the opposition between February and November 2013.

39. As regards the inter-communal violence that occurred in the prefectures of Beyla and Nzérékoré from 15 to 18 July 2013, the Government set up a panel of judges and a joint commission, consisting of gendarmes and police officers, to investigate these events and to receive victims' complaints. At least 20 people are being held at the Nzérékoré central prison and 14 have been placed under judicial supervision. The OHCHR office in Guinea has supported these judges by accompanying them on fact-finding missions on an ad hoc basis in Koulé and in Nzérékoré in order to facilitate the establishment of contacts with victims and witnesses and by communicating information likely to facilitate their work. During these missions, the OHCHR Guinea office also encouraged the victims to file complaints. As a result, some 150 complaints have been lodged with the judges.

F. Economic, social and cultural rights

40. In 2013, the Government continued its efforts to strengthen the enjoyment of economic, social and cultural rights. Investments have been made in electricity networks and the renovation of urban roads in large cities. Steps have been made to increase women's access to health, including the provision of caesarean sections free of charge.

41. In addition to the continued difficulties in gaining access to basic social services, the inter-communal violence of July 2013 had a negative impact on access to education for children in Guinée Forestière, in particular in the prefectures of Beyla and Nzérékoré. During this violence, three schools were entirely destroyed, six were looted and four

[4] Tensions between the communities living in the vicinity of Mount Yonon and the Vale mining company resulted in seven people being killed and about a dozen injured, and caused major material damage.

damaged. Furthermore, at least 130 teachers fearing for their safety left their place of employment and did not return at the start of the academic year in September 2013. Others were transferred to Nzérékoré, depriving thousands of children of their right to education. The Government has had to carry out awareness-raising drives in all the localities of the Beyla prefecture in order to meet groups of teachers and reassure them about their security conditions. The OHCHR office in Guinea has also taken part in these meetings with other United Nations agencies, such as the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF).

IV. Activities of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights in Guinea

A. Transitional justice and national reconciliation

42. As a result of the political and electoral tensions, the Government decided to suspend the organization of national consultations on transitional justice. For its part, OHCHR Guinea has continued its technical cooperation with the relevant national actors.

43. This cooperation has resulted in the organization of information sessions for the provisional National Reconciliation Commission, further to the arguments made since 2011 to the Government about effectively making available the logistical and human resources necessary for the organization of the national consultations on the establishment of transitional justice mechanisms. The OHCHR Guinea office has also participated actively in the process to develop and validate the project to hold consultations on national reconciliation, whose implementation has been postponed until 2014 on account of the electoral context.

44. As part of their strategy for contributing to calming the social climate, the OHCHR and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), in collaboration with three local non-governmental organizations,[5] have implemented a support project for the victims of torture and violence against women. This project has enabled 50 women who were victims of violence (including sexual violence) during the events of 28 September 2009 to receive medical, psychosocial and food support and to earn a living. Furthermore, the project has made it possible to develop a database aimed at facilitating follow-up of cases.

B. Reform of the security sector

45. The OHCHR office in Guinea has continued to support the legislative and institutional measures currently being taken in the security sector, which have mainly involved seminars aimed at promoting awareness among the population and facilitating ownership and acceptance by the security sector of a civilian and democratic mechanism to monitor its conduct.

46. Within the framework of the legislative elections, the OHCHR Guinea office has contributed to providing training on human rights for 152 trainers, police officers and gendarmes, members of the Special Force for Election Security, and to the sessions organized subsequently, from 14 to 22 September 2013, for at least 15,000 officials in Conakry and in the eight administrative regions of the country. The involvement of OHCHR focused on human rights issues connected to the elections and operations to

[5] Association guinéenne des assistantes sociales, Association des parents et amis des victimes du massacre du 28 septembre 2009, Centre Mère-Enfant.

maintain and restore order. The Special Force was thus able to prevent any human rights violations during the electoral process. Its conduct complied with the law, a fact that was highlighted by all those involved, including the election observation missions present in Guinea.

C. Support for the Ministry of Human Rights and Public Liberties and for civil society organizations

47. During 2013, the OHCHR office in Guinea provided the Ministry of Human Rights and Public Liberties with technical support. It supported the organization of a workshop to strengthen the skills of Ministry staff in July 2013, and the commemoration of the International Day in Support of Victims of Torture and Human Rights Day.

48. OHCHR Guinea has also continued with its organizational measures initiated in 2012, establishing frameworks for regular consultation with non-governmental organizations on the situation of human rights in Guinea and gradually institutionalizing its cooperation with the local partner organizations. This partnership has resulted in, amongst other things, the establishment by the OHCHR Regional Office in Nzérékoré of thematic groups on human rights education and citizenship education, assistance to vulnerable persons and gender-based violence. Thanks to technical advice, community action, training and logistical support, the information tools designed to prevent and protect against human rights violations have been significantly improved.

49. In addition, joint field missions have been organized with these organizations, and three projects have been carried out, namely a series of interactive radio broadcasts on human rights, a large-scale campaign against gender-based violence in Nzérékoré and all the districts of the Boola sub-prefecture in the Beyla prefecture and an extensive public information campaign on the right to own land and women's right of inheritance in 60 rural communities.

50. As part of the capacity-building programme for civil society actors, at least 413 people have attended training and awareness-raising sessions on human rights-related topics, including the role and responsibility of institutions tasked with civilian and democratic oversight of the security forces, women's inheritance rights and the right to own land. In the context of the legislative elections, at least 120 human rights defenders received training on the observation and monitoring of the human rights situation during election periods. Furthermore, at least 50 media actors were provided with training on human rights and the social responsibility of journalists during election periods. The provision of a toll-free number has made it possible to warn the authorities in good time about numerous human rights violations related to the elections, before, during and after the vote. It has also been an important tool for promoting human rights and raising awareness of non-violence.

51. Seven human rights clubs have been set up in the universities of Conakry and Coyah, including a prefectoral club in Nzérékoré.

D. Strengthening of cooperation with the United Nations human rights protection mechanisms

52. In 2012, the High Commissioner for Human Rights recommended that Guinea should strengthen cooperation with the United Nations human rights treaty bodies and the Human Rights Council special procedures. Little progress has been noted, even though the OHCHR office in Guinea has systematically urged the Government, in particular the Ministry of Human Rights and Public Liberties, to engage in this cooperation.

53. OHCHR Guinea has provided technical and financial support to the Ministry of Social Action, the Advancement of Women and Children's Affairs with the drafting of initial reports on the implementation of the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography.

V. Conclusions and recommendations

54. During the reporting period, the Government continued its efforts to reform the security sector and adopted, following a participatory process, the national security policy, as well as sectoral policies (police, army, judiciary, customs and forestry officials). The Government initiated reform of the judicial sector but that reform is not yet operational. Although transitional justice mechanisms have not yet been set up, a consultations project on national reconciliation has been developed with the support of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and it is expected to be implemented in 2014. The measures taken by the Government, in particular the provision of better food in prisons and the building or renovation of certain prisons and infrastructure for the judiciary, the police and the gendarmerie, have made it possible to improve conditions of detention. In the framework of the legislative elections, the public demonstrations organized by the opposition during the preparatory phase resulted in violence that caused many victims and important material damage. The Government has established commissions to investigate the causes of the violence. The legislative elections, awaited since 2010, passed off relatively peacefully with a high turnout but were marred by organizational problems and irregularities, which had an impact on the enjoyment of fundamental rights and public freedoms, in particular on the right to vote and the right to participate in public life.

55. Despite certain progress, there are still many challenges to be taken up. There has been little improvement in the fight against impunity since the High Commissioner's last report. The investigations into the events of 28 September 2009 and the incidents in Zogota in August 2012 have made little progress. Although the Government of Guinea declared 2013 the "Year of Justice", reform of the judicial system has not made significant progress. The fact that the human, financial and material resources made available to the judiciary remain extremely limited and the failure to adopt decrees enabling the implementation of the legislation governing the judiciary and establishing the Supreme Council of Justice constitute serious barriers to the independence of the judiciary. Deficiencies in the functioning of the judicial system have aggravated the crisis of confidence in the justice system. Furthermore, conditions of detention remain very poor throughout the country and require sustained efforts on the part of the authorities.

56. Widespread violence against women and girls is a real cause for concern, as are the inter-communal clashes that occurred in Guinée Forestière in July 2013, which caused heavy loss of life, many injuries, the displacement of people and considerable material damage. The establishment of a panel of judges to investigate these incidents is a positive move but no progress has been made on account of the electoral context.

A. Recommendations addressed to the Government of Guinea

57. **The Government of Guinea should take the necessary measures to:**

(a) Step up efforts to combat impunity, in particular through the effective prosecution of the alleged perpetrators of human rights violations involved in the events of 28 September 2009, in the incidents in Zogota in August 2012, in the inter-communal violence from 15 to 18 July 2013 and in the many cases of torture pending before the courts;

(b) Accelerate reform of the justice sector, increase the material, financial and human resources of judicial personnel, and take the necessary steps to regulate the status of the judiciary in the interests of an independent and equitable system of justice;

(c) Continue strengthening the resources of the security forces in order for them to perform their public security role in accordance with the relevant applicable international principles, and to ensure that they have received training on human rights and international humanitarian law;

(d) Strengthen the fight against all forms of discrimination, in particular violence against women and girls, with special emphasis on the fight against sexual violence and female genital mutilation;

(e) Organize participatory national consultations, which are open to all and transparent, on the topic of transitional justice, publish the results in a public report, and on the basis of those results, establish transitional justice mechanisms;

(f) Establish an interministerial committee for the drafting of reports to the United Nations treaty bodies.

B. Recommendations addressed to the international community

58. **The international community should:**

(a) Continue to support the reform process in the security and justice sectors;

(b) Provide the necessary assistance to the Government to reduce poverty and unemployment (in particular among young people) and contribute to improving the realization of economic, social and cultural rights.